

- Never use bottles for sweet/sugary drinks (e.g. fruit juice, squash, pop) or let your child walk around or sit in his pram with a bottle in his mouth.
- Giving the dummy or bottle to the 'dummy fairy' or leaving it on a 'dummy tree' may help you make a clean break - especially if it's in return for a small present.
- If you feel your child needs to give up their dummy in stages, limit the use of the dummy to bedtimes at first. Have a special place where the dummy goes when your child gets out of bed - such as a bag or box.
- **REMEMBER** - it's never too late to get rid of your child's dummy or bottle.

Dummies and Sleeping

As there is some research that using a dummy when putting a baby down to sleep might reduce the risk of sudden infant death, The Lullaby Trust advises:

- don't force your baby to use a dummy or tie it on to baby using a cord
- if you choose to use a dummy make sure it is part of your baby's regular sleep routine
- stop giving a dummy to your baby to go to sleep between 6 and 12 months

Don't Worry!

Your child may fret to begin with but will soon forget about the dummy or bottle, particularly if you try to keep them busy and distracted for the first few days.

If your child is finding it difficult to give up their dummy or bottle, contact your local Children's Centre, health visitor or family nurse for further ideas and support.

Things parents have told us:

'It wasn't as bad as I thought, I just decided it had to go.'

'He has started talking now so we have now gotten rid of the dummy.'

'After a couple of nights he stopped asking for the dummy.'

Speech and Language Therapy Services

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Dummies and Bottles



Letting young babies have a dummy to calm them when they are upset or tired is fine - as is giving them their milk in a bottle.

BUT as babies grow older and turn into toddlers, their needs change.

Try to wean your child off their dummy and bottle when they start to babble or at least by 12 months of age.



Using dummies and bottles too often for long periods of time can lead to:

- Teeth being pushed out of position
- Tooth decay, especially when dipping dummies in syrup or jam or giving fruit juice or sugary drinks in bottles
- The range of tongue movements not developing appropriately, leading to the child not being able to pronounce some speech sounds properly. Speech sounds affected in this way may need years of speech therapy to correct.
- Poor speech and language development generally due to fewer opportunities to practice talking because there is a dummy or bottle in the way!

Top Tips

- Help your child to find something else as a comforter (this could be a soft toy or snugly blanket)
- Plan ahead - so that your child is ready to give up their dummy by 12-18 months
- Prepare your child by reading books about getting rid of the dummy; this can help your child get used to the idea of not having a dummy. Try:
 - ‘The Last Noo-Noo’ by Jill Murphy
 - ‘No More Dummy for Piggy’ by Bernette Ford and Sam Williams
- Follow your health visitors advice about introducing a trainer cup for milk and other drinks